

"Culture and Critique"

How do we achieve social justice? How do we change society for the better? Some would argue that we must do it by changing the laws or state institutions. Others that we must do it by changing individual attitudes. I argue that although both of these factors are important and relevant, we must also change culture. What does this mean? Culture, I argue, is a set of social meanings that shapes and filters how we think and act. Problematic networks of social meanings constitute an ideology. Entrenched ideologies are resilient and are barriers to social change, even in the face of legal interventions. I argue that an effective way to change culture is through social movements and contentious politics, and that philosophy has a role to play in promoting such change.